

COLUMNS

## Mobile commerce app design best-practice tips

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The use of mobile commerce solutions increases daily and consumer expectations about quality and user experience are escalating.

The mobile commerce conversation has moved beyond just having an application to a demand for services that altogether improve the shopping customer journey.

A recent study by EConsultancy emphasized just how negatively consumers are responding to mobile commerce experiences that do not meet their expectations.

To this effect, mobile solutions that are not user-friendly can actually hurt brands and drive traffic to competitors, with 55 percent of respondents claiming that a bad experience hurts their opinion of a brand, and 79 percent admitting to turning to a competitor after a poor mobile experience.

While it is very important that every retailer start developing a mobile strategy, a poor presence can be just as risky and often times worse than no presence at all.

To develop a first class mobile commerce user experience, here are some best practices to follow:

### Make it seamless

To cater to your mobile shoppers, who tend to be on the go consumers, solutions should have an overall focus on streamlining the existing customer journey in every way imaginable.

To maximize the mobile conversion rate the number of customers that download the app versus the number that actually makes a purchase make it as easy as possible for consumers to download your app, find products and complete the purchase.

A mobile experience should never be any more difficult than shopping in a store.

### Streamline the customer journey

Start the experience by making it easy to log into your wallet or app. This is where a lot of traffic is generally lost, because creating an account does take up some of the user's time.

It is customary to require customers to provide certain essential information during login that is helpful for targeted marketing purposes, but keep it short and sweet. We recommend using a maximum of six or seven fields, because any more may result in higher bounce traffic.

The best way to streamline the login process is by integrating systems such as PayPal or Facebook, so that your customers are quickly enabled to create and access their account based on existing profile information.

Once customers have created their account and are logged in, try to follow a three-click ordering process. This means customers are able to add products to their virtual shopping basket in no more than three clicks.

Payments are probably the hardest step for anyone in the customer journey, because it is not convenient or even easy to enter a large amount of credit card information into a phone without making mistakes or having to start over.

As a result of the difficult payment processes in many apps, 66 percent of shoppers have abandoned a mobile purchase at checkout, and 47 percent claim that they failed to complete a transaction because the checkout process was too difficult, per Jumio.

Streamlined payment is best achieved by integrating options that store users' payment information securely in the cloud, such as MasterPass or PayPal Express.

Additionally, there should always be an option to store payment credentials for one-click payments on future purchases. This gives customers a reason to return to your app rather than going to a competitor where they will have to re-input all of their information.

**Build customer trust in your solution**

To build a service that is an extension of your brand in a way that earns the trust of your consumers, you have to be able to reassure shoppers that their exchanges with you are secure and that their personal information is protected.

To minimize consumer security concerns, all communication about payment should be timely, especially if the customer is having a problem.

Do find out how consumers prefer to communicate with you, be it through the app, by email or via push notifications, and by giving the option to opt-in to ensure your service is not intrusive.

**Know your size**

Mobile commerce apps should never be larger than 50 megabytes, otherwise a Wi-Fi connection will be required for download.

We suggest staying under 10 megabytes to ensure the download is fast and easy.

When it comes to visuals within the app, images should be large enough so that they are easily viewable without zooming. This will give customers access to all the essential details, so that products can be quickly chosen and added to the basket.

**Be an extension of your brand**

Whether consumers are browsing your app, purchasing on the Web, or making the trip to your store, each experience should resemble and complement one another.

If it is easy to make a purchase on your ecommerce site, the mobile experience should deliver the same fluidity.

If the ordering and payment process is expedited online or by mobile phone, the in-store pick-up process should follow suit.

Extend the expedited mobile customer journey in-store by using in-store incentives such as skip-the-lines as an additional way to reward your mobile consumers and drive adoption.

Undoubtedly, consumers who are mobile shopping value their time. Convenience and user-friendliness, above all else, are imperative to an enjoyable consumer experience and a loyal brand relationship.

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